

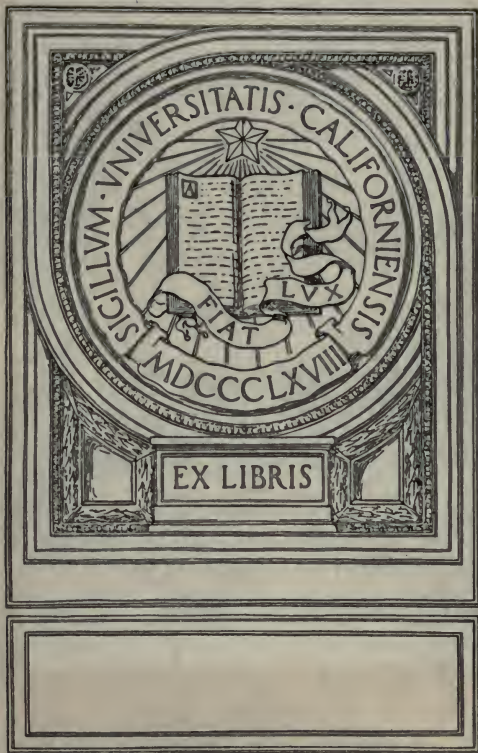
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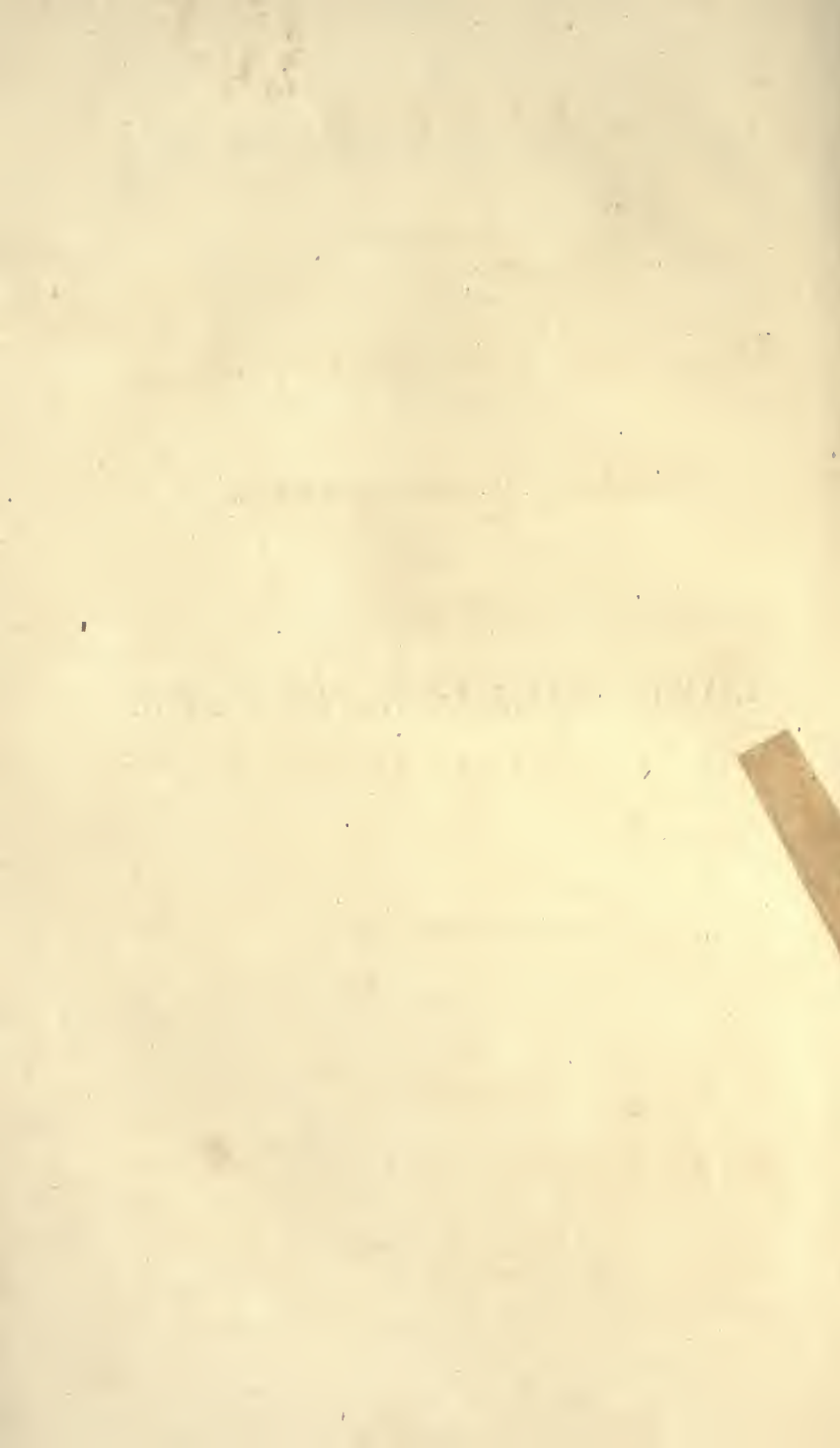


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LORD HOLLAND's LETTER.



LETTER

TO THE

REV. DR. SHUTTLEWORTH,

WARDEN OF NEW COLLEGE,

OXFORD.

By LORD HOLLAND.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.

MDCCCXXVII.

LETTER

TO THE EDITOR OF THE

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PRINTED BY T. BRETTELL, RUPERT STREET, HAYMARKET.

TO

THE REV. DR. SHUTTLEWORTH.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOU ask, if the Roman Catholics would be contented, or promise to be contented, with being placed on the same footing with other Dissenters; and if they would not look to the subversion of the Protestant Church?—My answer must be partly historical and partly conjectural. It is, however, first necessary to clear the ground, by explaining what the being *upon the same footing with other Dissenters* means; though I dare say you are one of the very few, out of Parliament, who are aware of the anomalous and contradictory state in which the laws affecting Dissenters, who are not Roman Catholics, at present stand in England and Ireland. All, except Roman Catholics, and perhaps Jews and Quakers (though, if *they* are excluded, it is by a mere accident, unforeseen and unintended by the framers

of the statute) are entitled *by law* to sit in Parliament: no test excludes them from the Lords or the Commons, either in theory or in practice. In Ireland, the Protestant Dissenter is excluded from no office whatever, except such (purely ecclesiastical I conceive) as a man must qualify for by subscribing the thirty-nine Articles. Consequently, if Irish Catholics were placed on the same footing with other Dissenters, all offices in Ireland, as well as Parliament, would be open to them by common law and ancient right, as well as in fact and practice.

In England it is otherwise. In consequence of certain statutes, no Protestant Dissenter, or indeed any other whatever, can hold the meanest office of Tidewaiter *by law*. He is punishable for so doing, but the Legislature annually defers his punishment for a year, in order and on condition that, in the course of that year, he shall violate his conscience, and, according to the doctrine of our Church, incur damnation by taking the communion after a rite he disapproves and condemns. The result of this is, that Dissenters, at least such as are not very scrupulous indeed, do hold such offices as

they can get in corporations and under Government, *against law and under sufferance*, exposed to a penalty that hangs over their heads, suspended by an Act of Parliament, which, in form and avowed character, is a single thread, but rendered, by the frequency of the usage, as strong a cable as any in the Statute Book. But they are still exposed by this law to the imputation of acting illegally, to the taunts of their colleagues, and to a badge of inferiority. Practically, perhaps, they are satisfied, and certainly they substantially escape uninjured from the Test Act; but they are not, and cannot be, contented: and, above all, you can hardly expect them to *say* they are contented with such an unjust and unnecessary mark of degradation upon them. Place the Roman Catholics in England upon the same footing, and I suppose their feelings would be the same; they would acquiesce and submit, probably, without a murmur; they would be thankful for the practical benefit conferred, especially if accompanied with two much greater, *viz.*—admission to Parliament, and admission to vote for elections; but they would not, and could not, applaud the

jealousy, or rather the love of assumed superiority, which left them exposed, nominally, to the fierce penalties of the Test Act*. This, however, would affect few, if any, *Irish* Roman Catholics, and that so remotely, that it would in no way or degree impair the satisfaction they would feel on recovering their admissibility to Parliament, and to all *Irish* temporal offices.

But will they abandon all designs of subverting the Protestant Church? and will they say so distinctly?

* It was no part of my design, in writing this Letter, to examine or to expose that disgrace to our Statute Book, commonly called the Test Act; but having incidentally mentioned it, I must acknowledge that it is matter of surprise to me that all religious men have not long since combined with the friends of freedom to procure the abrogation of so disgusting a law. One part of it, the sacramental test, is as revolting to every sense of religion as the whole together is hostile to the rights of conscience and the liberty of the subject. It is an Act to abridge the prerogatives of the Crown, to violate the liberties of the people, to hold out temptations to perjury and premiums on hypocrisy, and to entrap the unwary members of the Church themselves into a profanation of the most sacred rite of their religion. In short, I know of no law which, in principle, is liable to so many and such grave objections.

To this I can only answer, that, for these last twenty years, they have been saying so distinctly, solemnly, and, I believe, sincerely, in every petition, in every declaration, in every oath, and in evidence upon oath before Parliament. But whether they *now* either feel or say it, or if they do, whether, when they find that such proffered condition purchases nothing in return, they will continue to do so, is somewhat more problematical; and, for the following reasons:—Their adversaries, very unadvisedly for the interests of the Irish Protestant Church, have constantly urged its existence as the chief, if not the sole motive for withholding their political rights from Roman Catholic subjects. Some have even said that a Church, so anomalous in its nature,—so disproportionately rich in its endowments, and differing from so large a majority of the inhabitants, in its tenets—can only be maintained by laws of political exclusion. To the examples of Scotland—of America—of the Netherlands, they have said,—in the first, a *different* religion from our own is established; in the second, *no* religion is established; in a third, there is a *co-establishment* of both religions: but,

in Ireland, where that of the minority is dominant, the majority of the people, who belong to another, must be kept out of their political rights for the purpose of preserving it. Is it not natural, is it not just for men, to whom so strange an argument is addressed, to reply, "We might submit to pay a Church to which we do not belong; we might agree not to molest an establishment which our wealthy countrymen prefer, and which the most powerful portion of our empire cherishes and protects, provided such Church and establishment did not interfere with our temporal concerns and constitutional rights: but if the Church, not satisfied with her own privileges and endowments, is to be made the cause or the pretext for depriving us of that share of the benefits of the State which all our fellow-subjects enjoy; if she is the great obstacle to our reasonable and legitimate desires, the bar to obvious and undeniable justice,—why then she is our chief and only enemy; and it is little more than bare justice to ourselves, to our brethren, and to our posterity, to do our best to overturn her." Thus, instead of admissibility to Parliament being a stepping stone to

the subversion of the Church (with which for more than twenty years it is my firm persuasion it was never associated,) the *exclusionists* have taught the petitioners that the subversion of the Church may become a *necessary* preliminary to their admissibility to Parliament. And have they not in truth the same means of subverting the Church Establishment without being in Parliament, and ten times stronger motives for doing it, than if they were admitted? It can only be done in three ways—by force—by public opinion—or by law. The two first are obviously to the full as much within their reach, without what is called Emancipation as with it. Indeed, I should say more, but it would lead me too far to explain my reasons, for they affect the whole of this great question.

With respect to subversion by law, it appears to me, that the substitution of persons professing the Roman Catholic religion for those Protestants who owe their seats exclusively to the Roman Catholic interest, so far from assisting, would rather impede any such project. They would, if desirous of fame, or ambitious of power in Parliament, be extremely cautious of stirring such ques-

tions themselves ; and, stirred by them, or supported by them, questions of that sort would excite more notice, jealousy, and suspicion, than in the hands of Protestant representatives. Yet, many Protestants might be found (indeed, I know many in Ireland), as eager and as earnest for the reduction of the church revenues, from worldly, and, perhaps, interested motives, as any Catholic can be from feelings of a religious nature. And I will frankly acknowledge, that, *judging by myself*, I should imagine English Protestants would become more indifferent to the fate of the Irish Protestant Church, if they thought the Irish Catholic laity were for ever to be excluded, on her account, from Parliament, than they have hitherto been. As long as there is a prospect of effecting a real, as well as nominal union with the Irish people, and admitting them to the full enjoyment of the Constitution,—so long on the ground of scrupulous, punctilious, perhaps overstrained good faith, and in consideration of the article of Union only (not, I confess, from any sense of her usefulness), I, for one, am ready to maintain the Protestant Irish

Church, and her enormous revenues : but the moment I am satisfied that she is to be maintained, not only at the expense of treasure and of reason, but of principle and justice to others,—that she exists only in virtue of the degradation and exclusion of the large body of the inhabitants of the country, that moment I consider her as not only an useless and expensive, but an unlawful and tyrannical institution, and therefore a nuisance to be put down. I hope we are not come, but I think (thanks to some who call themselves friends to that Church) that we are fast coming to that pass. The Church of Ireland is in jeopardy. If she is to stand athwart the only way that conducts to peace and good government, I devoutly hope she may crumble to pieces : but if she can be persuaded to let the throng pass by her side without molestation, I believe it will be only here and there a surly passenger who will grumble at being turned out of his direct path, and sneer a little at the eyesore of so preposterous an edifice.

As to the other notion, that the Roman Catholics aim at seizing the Church, and converting her revenues to the support of their

own, as far as public declarations (on oath or otherwise), private information, and reasonable conjecture can produce certainty in one's mind of any men's intentions, I should say, with confidence, that no such project is entertained—no such end desired, even by the Roman Catholic clergy; and that it would be resisted, if attempted—rejected, if offered, by the Catholic laity, from motives, not merely of propriety and prudence, but of interest and temper. Roman Catholics have now, for forty years, bought old church and abbey lands in Ireland as willingly, and of late years to as great an extent, as Protestants. They consider our Protestant confiscations of church property as the best possible title; and they are not such fools as not to know, that the same principle which would assign to the ancient and original Church the tithes and lands settled by Parliament on the Protestant Church, would shake the title of those who hold property by a similar or more flagrant act of sacrilege. Hitherto, all the plans (and there have been many) devised for paying the Irish Roman Catholic Church, out of the revenues either of the Church or State, have been suggested and devised by

Protestant prelates and ministers (Mr. Pitt, particularly), and have always met with a cold reception from the Catholic clergy, and a yet colder, not to say a positive resistance, from the laity. They are latterly become yet more jealous on that head. They stickle for the entire dependence of their bishops and pastors on their flocks. I am satisfied if there were a revolution to-morrow, and Ireland were separated from England, that, out of the horrible confiscations which would inevitably ensue, not one rood of land would go to their secular clergy, whom they would pay by contributions or stipends, but not by endowments.

The result of all this prolix argument, which applies exclusively to Ireland and the Irish Church, is this, — that there is still some prospect of disarming or defeating the hostility felt by the Roman Catholics of that country to the Protestant Church, by conceding the remaining political points ;—that timely conciliation would certainly have had that effect ;—that, without a concession of those points, the hostility must subsist and increase ;—and that the later it comes, the less effectual it is likely

to prove in removing it;—but that such concession must ever afford the best chance of removing or mitigating the hostility, while, in truth, it would afford very little, or rather no means of gratifying it, in addition to those which already exist.

As far as your question relates to the English Church and English Roman Catholic Dissenters, there is no difficulty in answering it in positive and unqualified terms. English Catholics entertain *no* project, and harbour *no* wish, of disturbing the Establishment—much less of seizing any part of its revenues for themselves. They would, if it were deemed necessary, make any declaration, or give any security or promise, to that effect, that ingenuity could devise, or jealousy suggest. There would, indeed, be something ludicrous in exacting any such promise. One might as well insist on every urchin that comes to Westminster School engaging his word of honour not to pull down the Abbey.

Since I have been betrayed into much greater length than I intended, and am speaking of English Roman Catholics, I will encroach on your patience a little longer,

and remark on one or two topics which, though not glanced at in your letter, have been very conspicuous this season in the discussions on this eternal subject.

It is often said, that the intemperate language of the Association, and of the Irish Roman Catholic priesthood, forms in itself a strong objection to the measure; and it is not unfrequently added, by those who urge that objection, that were the Catholics more moderate there would be more disposition in Government and Parliament to accede to their wishes. Now, to the first proposition I answer, that the intemperate language complained of, is an objection to the laws as they stand, not to the alteration we propose. It is a consequence, and, as we contend, an unavoidable, though mischievous, consequence of the *exclusion combined with the English constitution*. If inconvenient and dangerous, it is an inconvenience and danger which we must continue to incur, till we resolve either to remove the immediate and chief cause, *viz.* the exclusion; or to alter, for the purpose of maintaining that exclusion, the very Constitution which facilitates and sanctions such freedom of language, and which we have, by the Union, engaged to

secure to the Irish people. It is worse than idle to urge the bad, but necessary, effects of a law, as a reason, or rather a motive of passion, for maintaining it. As long as injustice continues, discontent must and ought to prevail. As long as freedom of speech is allowed to subsist, discontent will and must produce complaint, remonstrance, and invective.

The blood will follow where the knife is driven,
The flesh will quiver where the pincers tear,
And sighs and cries by nature grow on pain.

It is beyond the power of tyranny itself, to inflict a wound and please the wounded. The victims of injustice will continue as long as human nature is human nature *maligné ferrum accipere*.

Now, as to the second assurance, that moderation would be more likely to disarm all opposition to the claims of the Catholics, than the tone of indignation, and even menace, in which they have often indulged, I frankly confess that I do not believe it. My distrust is grounded on experience. A review of the conduct of those who make such assurances, and indeed of Parliament and Government itself, would lead, I fear, to the very opposite conclusion.

Without reverting to 1792 and 1793 (when the same prayer that had been contumeliously thrown over the bar, though modestly preferred in time of peace, was granted on the eve of a war, and while a convention of demagogues was sitting to enforce it), the case of the English Roman Catholics is quite sufficient to demonstrate the insincerity of these professions of their opponents. They never indulged in intemperate language—they have been uniformly loyal and peaceable. During the most pressing periods of the war with France, they were active and forward in supporting the Government, as far as the misplaced jealousy of the laws would permit them; and farther than was by those laws required of them. You would suppose, therefore, that, as distinguished from Irish Roman Catholics, they would be the objects of special favour; you would infer, from the present language of the *Exclusionists*, that, if not from generosity or gratitude, from policy, at least, or with a view of inculcating on the Irish the advantages of moderation and forbearance, the English Catholics, whose quiet demeanour formed such a contrast to the turbulent demagogues of Ireland, would

be rewarded with some signal benefits, and distinguished by some peculiar privileges and countenance. At least, you would be confident, that if not so distinguished, the only reason assigned for an indiscriminate exclusion, would be the difficulty of separating their case from that of the Irish, and the inconvenience and anomaly of establishing one law for the Catholic Dissenters of one part of the empire, and another for the other. But all these conjectures, founded on sense, reason, and consistency, are contradicted by the fact. The anomaly subsists; but it subsists the other way. The turbulent Irish Catholic is entitled, *by law*, to vote at elections; the peaceable English Catholic is debarred of that privilege, if either candidate or freeholder object to him. The Irish Catholic may be a magistrate, the English cannot; and the latter, so far from being favoured, is not admitted to many valuable privileges, which the Irishman has obtained in moments of irritation and menace.

An attempt was recently made to place the English Roman Catholics on the same footing as the Irish. Lord Liverpool and the Archbishop of Canterbury supported the Bill; yet

it was rejected ; and such miserable part of it only, as was necessary to accomplish the consolidation of the revenue boards of the two countries, was with difficulty extorted, by the influence of the Treasury, from those who *now* affect to be open to reason and supplication, but deaf to all intimidation and reproach. With such facts before him, can any sober man believe, that the failure of the Catholic Question is owing to the intemperate language of the Association? Is it likely, that any demagogue therein will be deterred, by the hope of conciliating such adversaries, from uttering the inflammatory speeches of which we complain? Nay, what is infinitely more important and serious,—is he likely to infer, from experience of the past, that any asperity of language, actual confusion, or foreign war, would retard the accomplishment of his objects? Irish history, and English law, teach him, alas! a very different lesson.

One word on another, and a yet more delicate topic, the late conversions from popery, or, as it is styled by some, the new reformation in Ireland. It has been somewhat unaccountably introduced into all our debates ;

but, in my judgment, it bears very little relation to the political question, and if any, only such as furnishes an additional motive for the removal of all political distinctions between the members of the two conflicting sects.—I acknowledge that I have myself little faith in these conversions. I doubt the extent—I doubt the sincerity of them—I doubt yet more strongly the policy, prudence, or safety of the attempt, or of the ostentatious triumph with which its partial success is announced. I concur in that respect with Dr. Lawrence, Archbishop of Cashel, who, in his late charge to the Clergy of Munster, observes, that “whether or not the interests of *Protestantism* would be benefited by a proceeding of this nature (meaning an attempt on both sides to make proselytes) may be *dubious* ; but it must be *certain*, that the interests of *Christianity* would be considerably injured by it.” I refer you with confidence to that excellent composition. It is such as well becomes the brother of the late Dr. Lawrence, of Doctors’ Commons, one of the most learned, upright, and able men, that ever enlightened the profession to which he belonged, or ever sup-

plied his contemporaries in public life with useful knowledge and wisdom, from the stores of a retentive memory and comprehensive understanding.

It is true, another very eminent Prelate is understood to have recognised, in this great work of conversion, the "finger of God." His exertions, however, against the political claims of the Roman Catholics, appear to me at variance with any such persuasion. A person convinced of such an interference of Providence, cannot consistently dread the machinations of the Romish Church. If the long-expected season of reformation and light is arrived, why continue the penal laws? Surely the finger of God cannot require the aid of the 30th of Charles II. If the conversion is to be effected by ordinary human means, the removal of all grounds of worldly enmity, and an increased intercourse in the fellowship of political life, are more likely to reconcile the jarring opinions of the two sects, or to bring one to acquiesce in the opinions of the other, than the continuance of hostility on other topics, and an irremoveable line of political demarcation between them. If, on the other hand, the

zealous promoters of this work are persuaded that it is about to be accomplished by divine interposition, it is impossible—it would be impious in them to suppose that a harsh, uncharitable human law can be necessary or useful to accomplish the designs of the Deity. If the exercise of spiritual power for carnal and political purposes, which we are so ready to impute to the Popish Priesthood, be, as we call it, Impiety; so the enactment of, or adherence to, penal and human laws for the spiritual purposes of converting, reclaiming, or enlightening, is *Persecution* even in the very limited sense which the *Exclusionists* would fain annex to that word*. But it is curious to hear the missionaries of our faith talk of the late endeavours to convert the Irish Roman Catholics, as a new

* They studiously confine the meaning of the word *Persecution* to any compulsory conformity with the Established Church, any interference with religious worship, and any actual punishment for religious observances or opinions. To deny a man political power, or the capacity of obtaining it, is, according to them, no punishment, and therefore no persecution. But political power, or at least a capacity of obtaining it, is in truth only another phrase for political liberty. It will hardly be maintained, in a free country, that, to deprive a citizen of his political

and unheard of experiment. It has been tried again and again, and has failed. What was the object of the hateful penal code, but to enforce such conversions, by enticing

liberty, is not to punish him. The best writers consider it as a punishment, and so do our laws. Several statutes inflict an incapacity of holding offices, or serving the Crown or the people, as a punishment for a heinous offence. The House of Lords, on a celebrated occasion, sanctioned (though not, it must be acknowledged, with any reference to Roman Catholics) the abstract principle, that the “*punishment of a total incapacity is the heaviest next to loss of life;” and that “†nothing but a crime of a detestable nature ought to put an Englishman under a disqualification to serve his prince and country.” It follows, that the exclusion is a punishment, and being a punishment founded on, and arising from certain religious opinions, it must be *Persecution*. The term has consequently been applied to tests and disqualifications by the greatest masters of language, and most enlightened advocates of religious liberty: but its meaning was never more luminously defined, or more pathetically enforced, than in a short explanation given by the good and venerable Bishop of Norwich, in his place in Parliament, on the 16th March, 1827. “He was taught,” he said, “in early life, by better and wiser men than any now living, that *every penalty, every restriction, every disadvantage, every inconvenience imposed upon an individual, on account of his religion, was Persecution.*”

* Journals, February 1702.

† Journals, January 1702.

men, by every worldly inducement, to abandon, and by deterring them, by every worldly disadvantage, from adhering to, their faith? How is the exclusion from Parliament and high offices only to produce a change which the prospect of obtaining property, and the dread of incurring loss and personal degradation, and, in some cases, corporal punishment, outlawry, imprisonment, and even death could not atchieve? Can the dregs of that bitter code effect what the first sprightly runnings could never accomplish? The armies of Cromwell and William, though they subdued, could not extirpate the Irish race; nor could the zeal and persecution of Queen Anne's time change their religion. It is surely time to try a new experiment,—to adopt a more obvious, as well as a more humane system,—to endeavour to reconcile by good treatment, by equal laws, and by a full admission to the benefits of the Constitution, a people whom our sword has failed to exterminate, and our Church, backed as she has been by power, tests, exclusions, and penalties, has equally failed to convert.

There is one circumstance about the praise so loudly bestowed on these recent conver-

sions, which, I confess, I cannot reconcile to any principle of consistency or fair reasoning. When the question of the removal of the remaining disabilities was formerly agitated, the merits and demerits of the Roman Catholic religion were canvassed more narrowly than the nature of the question, in my poor judgment, either required or justified. But I remember, that one of the charges most successfully urged against the Church of Rome was, her spirit of proselytism, her activity in making converts, and her ostentation in proclaiming them. Now, I presume, what is reprehensible in one Church, cannot be commendable in another. Either our boasted zeal in conversions is liable to the censures we so liberally bestowed upon theirs, and, in that case, our success must not be presumptuously alleged as proof of the truth of our doctrine, or our condemnation of them must be retracted, and the success of such endeavours as they have made, or may hereafter make for a similar purpose, must be admitted, *pro tanto*, as an argument in favour of their faith. What prudent man would place the question on such an issue? What endless enmities and discord would ensue, if

the zealous on both sides should be invited and encouraged to molest each other with perpetual controversies, and alternate triumphs on religious subjects?

But be that as it will, I think, on impartial consideration, it must be allowed, that if the work of reformation is to proceed, it will advance more steadily when all is smooth and calm, than in the midst of turbulence and animosity on political questions. The repeal of the exclusion-laws may assist—it cannot retard its progress; a Papist may throw off his cloak of error and superstition in sunshine or in shelter; but, exposed to the buffets of the storm, and turned from your door with heartless indifference, he naturally, and necessarily clings to it as his only refuge and best protection.

I have acknowledged, that I expect little from these conversions in any case; but yet I think it clear, that they are more likely to be numerous, and less likely to be injurious to the peace of society, when the political disabilities are removed, than while they are in force. If, indeed, that great act of wisdom and justice were accomplished, there is one species of conversion to which I should look

with real confidence—I mean, the silent and imperceptible, but beneficial conversion of zeal to charity. Many a fanatical Papist would, I am persuaded, become a reasonable Roman Catholic ; and if some few evangelical Protestants should drop the harsh fruit which they gather from the brambles of controversy, for the more ordinary spiritual food which all Christians may partake, I do not believe that the cause of religion would suffer, and I am satisfied that of civil society and peace would gain by the exchange.

I have not touched upon those manifold reasons connected with general principles of justice, with the particular nature and spirit of our constitution, or with the transactions, remote or recent, of our history, which loudly call upon us to provide for the peace and happiness of the Empire, by fulfilling all implied engagements, and by restoring, both to the Crown and to the people, their ancient prerogatives and privileges.—I have omitted to do so, because I know you are disposed to acknowledge the validity of such arguments ; and because I am sure you will find them enforced, with an eloquence and

an authority which I cannot pretend to command, in the writings of Paley and of Burke, and in the speeches of Fox, Pitt, Windham, Lawrence, Romilly; Elliot, Grenville, and Grattan; and, indeed, of every English statesman, dead or living, who, for these last thirty years, has enjoyed any reputation for mingling philosophy, or exercising judgment or foresight, in his general views of legislation or policy.

My task has been confined to a few strictures on some popular topics, which have lately started up as objections to that great measure contemplated by the framers of the Union, and considered as ultimately inevitable by all who are anxious to maintain, improve, and complete the objects of that act.

I have not denied, that some hostility to the Established Church may be felt by those who have lately petitioned for a restoration of their political rights; but I have contended,—*1st.* that such hostility may have been created, and must be aggravated, by the rejection of their prayer; *2dly*, that the only rational hope of mitigating it, and indeed the best chance of defeating it, is by a conces-

sion of such points as may, by possibility, weaken the will, and cannot increase the means, of annoyance they already possess.

I have furthermore ventured to question the wisdom and the sincerity of some of the arguments and pretences, as well as the prudence, of some of the proceedings of the most active antagonists of the petitioners. The hope, for instance, of extinguishing inflammatory harangues and publications, as long as a large body of men, in full enjoyment of the freedom of speech, and of the press, are excluded from office and Parliament, I have shewn to be visionary and impracticable. Such warfare must continue, at all risks, till the provocation ceases, or till the weapons, provided by the Constitution for repelling it, are removed. In other words, we must choose between anarchy and despotism, if we are determined not to try conciliation.

I have argued, that those *Exclusionists* who declaim against the violence of the Catholic demagogues, do themselves provide for the continuance of the evil which they affect to deplore. I have proved, that their alleged disposition to treat with greater favour those who supplicate, than those who remonstrate

or menace, is belied by the whole tenor of their actions ; namely, by the frequent concessions they have made in the moments of distress, turbulence, and danger, and by their uniform and contumelious rejection of all requests, preferred in periods of comparative tranquillity, and in terms of humility and submission.

The conversions, or new reformation (which, it has been hinted, may supersede the necessity of concession), I have ventured to consider as entirely irrelevant to the great political question—as more likely, however, to be assisted than impeded by the admission of the objects of them to a full political fellowship with their countrymen—as hazardous, in all cases, to the harmony of civil society—and, so long as unjust political exclusions subsist, as dangerous to the peace and safety of the country.

I sat down to write a short Letter—I have written a tedious treatise ; but, should there be any thing in it that can directly, or indirectly, tend to remove a doubt in your candid mind, and to confirm you in an opinion which you are too charitable a man and too good an Englishman not to

wish to entertain, my time has not been entirely mis-spent.

At any rate you will, with your usual goodness, receive it as a proof of my earnestness in this great cause, and of my sincere desire to concur with one, for whom I feel so much regard and esteem as yourself.

I am, my Dear Sir,

Truly Your's,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

*New Burlington Street,
25th March, 1827.*

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